

through the first 10 months, as the gentleman knows, this Congress, the 110th Congress, compared to any other Congress in the history of the country, the 109 that came before us, through this date and time, this Congress has met more often and taken more votes than any Congress in the history of the country, bar none. So for the President to insinuate that we're holding these hearings and doing nothing else, again, it's inconsistent with the facts.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. If the gentleman would yield, it's, I mean, we're obviously in a very complicated world. We're trying to solve some very complicated problems. And the frustrating part is when you have the President of the United States have a series of comments throughout his administration that have basically, you know, simplified all of these issues. You know, after 9/11 the big great challenge he gave us, Mr. Speaker, was to go shopping. You know, we try to pass children's health care and he says, well, you can get health care at the emergency room. And then, Mr. MEEK, at his press conference today, he said that our whole children, SCHIP, trying to cover 10 million people program was a trick on the American people. These are, you know, we're wasting time holding hearings.

There are very serious issues that our families are dealing with, and to have the President of the United States, the most powerful man in the free world, someone who is able to stop children's health care from being administered in this country to 10 million kids, someone who's able to veto bills, and you need to rally, you know, a lot more Members of Congress in order to pass something, to try to simplify and make light, and I like to have as much fun as anybody else and we have our share of fun here, but we're dealing with some pretty serious issues. That the President's behavior and tone and temperament and comments on these issues becomes very frustrating.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you, Mr. RYAN. Personally, I'm just kind of glad that the President's criticizing the Congress for doing what we should do. The American people voted for a new direction. We have the fruits of the new direction here in these very new Members of Congress as it relates to the majority makers giving us, empowering those of us that have been here, and they're bringing ideas to the table as it relates to moving in a new direction. If I was the President, I would try to, you know, shut off the light bill over here at the Capitol so that we can stop working so that we can stop uncovering half of what's going on.

I mean, Mr. RYAN, you gave one, you have one of the best clips on YouTube saying this is the same administration, and he goes down the line because someone on the floor, I think, last year or the year before last criticized Democrats for questioning the President. And Mr. RYAN said, I'm sorry, but this

is the same administration that told us that we had to go to war, weapons of mass destruction. This is the same administration that ousted a CIA agent. I mean, this is proven stuff. This is not fiction. This is fact. And I always say, gentlemen and ladies, that when people look back on this period, they're going to see who was actually about the solution and who was actually validating what the administration has been doing. And I think that it's important for us to have this balance. And I think it's important for us because we, the four of us here on this floor right now, we're just like every other Joe and Sue out there. I mean, I was a skycap once upon a time and a State trooper. And you know, I carried luggage, "Yes, sir," "No, sir." I went out and patrolled the highways and byways in the State of Florida and offered myself to be a State Representative.

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I had a district office right there and went to Tallahassee and did what I had to do. Many of you, the same track as it relates to the State legislature or local elected officials, and we heard this. So now we're the same old Joe that left our local districts. Now we are in Congress, and we are going to ask the questions that the people that we represent will ask us. When I go home and I go to the grocery store, people ask me, What is going on? What do you mean? The President doesn't want it to happen. I said, it's not about the President's standing against children's health care insurance; it's about enough Republicans on the other side of the aisle that are standing with him, and that's what it's about.

And so I think it's important, gentlemen, that we look at it from that standpoint. The President is not running for reelection, but there are Members of Congress that are running for reelection. And it should not be a secret that come next November on a Tuesday morning or before as it relates to early voting, absentee voting, people will be able to stand in judgment of the individuals that are validating what the President is saying.

So it's really like which side of the ball are you on? Are you on the side of fiction or are you on the side of fact? The fact is about accomplishing things with the Democratic majority and some Republicans joining us in that effort, which I enjoy because we talk about bipartisanship and we are actually doing it, or those that are saying we have to stand in the way because we can't allow the American people to see a Congress that's functioning and questioning the executive branch.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Can I make a point too? And I want to say this because we all have a lot of good friends who are on the other side who have voted for the Labor-Health-Education appropriations bill, voted for defense, voted for the vets; and the argument being made today was that somehow this was unique that we are putting

several appropriations bills together. If you ask people in our districts, the whole process is foreign to them anyway. It's just get the job done. And when we look back at our Republicans friends, Mr. Speaker, when they were in charge, on 59 different occasions, had put bills together like we're trying to do. And so I think it's important. We are trying to get the job done. But this is not every Republican. This is, in my estimation, some very fringe, extreme members of the Republican Party who are basically backing the President on these things, and he has just enough Members on the Republican side to sustain a veto.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. In the House.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. In the House.

Mr. ALTMIRE. I know we're very short on time; so we'll turn it over to Mr. MURPHY shortly to close out.

But you talked about combining these appropriations bills and the criticism that we received from the other side. I wanted to remind my colleagues of the last time that this happened. It was very recently. We shouldn't need to remind them. It was just in February. And the reason we had to combine nine appropriations bills from last year in this session of Congress was because, after the outcome of the elections in 2006, the Republican Congress said, I'm done, I'm going home. I don't care about these nine appropriations bills. We'll leave it for the next group to fix. And that is what we had to deal with when we came in, nine appropriations bills that were not completed from the previous fiscal year. We were in the current fiscal year doing last year's work. So I couldn't believe what I was hearing today on the floor when we were being criticized for combining three appropriations bills in the current fiscal year when they left us with nine bills incomplete that we had to deal with.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It's the same disjointed kind of argument that the President, Mr. Speaker, has given us on the SCHIP bill. This is 10 million kids, \$35 billion over 5 years. We could pay for these 10 million kids to get health care for a whole year for 40 days in Iraq. And the President, who has run up \$3 trillion in debt, borrowed it from China, raised the debt limit five times, is now going to draw the line in the sand on fiscal responsibility on 40 days in Iraq to provide health care for 10 million kids. I mean, there are so many disjointed arguments and floating pieces that are going around here that just don't make a whole lot of sense to many of us.

I hope that we can try to continue to push to get more Members on the other side of the aisle to join with us to do some pretty basic things that the American people want us to do.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Thank you, Mr. RYAN.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, it has been an honor to stand in the shoes of Mr. MEEK and get to anchor this hour today. I feel like a better person, a better man for it.